



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

No. CCCLXXXII.

SEPTEMBER, 1888.

THE GLADSTONE-INGERSOLL CONTROVERSY.

THE CHURCH ITS OWN WITNESS.

THE Vatican Council, in its Decree on Faith has these words: "The Church itself, by its marvelous propagation, its eminent sanctity, its inexhaustible fruitfulness in all good things, its catholic unity and invincible stability, is a vast and perpetual motive of credibility, and an irrefragable witness of its own Divine legation."* Its Divine Founder said: "I am the Light of the world;" and, to His Apostles, He said also, "Ye are the light of the world;" and of His Church He added, "A city seated on a hill cannot be hid." The Vatican Council says: "The Church is its own witness." My purpose is to draw out this assertion more fully.

These words affirm that the Church is self-evident, as light is to the eye, and through sense, to the intellect. Next to the sun at noonday, there is nothing in the world more manifest than the one visible Universal Church. Both the faith and the infidelity of the world bear witness to it. It is loved and hated, trusted and

* "Const. Dogm. de Fide Catholica, c. iii.

feared, served and assaulted, honored and blasphemed : it is Christ or Antichrist, the Kingdom of God or the imposture of Satan. It pervades the civilized world. No man and no nation can ignore it, none can be indifferent to it. Why is all this ? How is its existence to be accounted for ?

Let me suppose that I am an unbeliever in Christianity, and that some *friend* should make me promise to examine the evidence to show that Christianity is a Divine revelation ; I should then sift and test the evidence as strictly as if it were in a court of law, and in a cause of life and death ; my will would be in suspense : it would in no way control the process of my intellect. If it had any inclination from the equilibrium, it would be towards mercy and hope ; but this would not add a feather's weight to the evidence, nor sway the intellect a hair's breadth.

After the examination has been completed, and my intellect convinced, the evidence being sufficient to prove that Christianity is a divine revelation, nevertheless I am not yet a Christian. All this sifting brings me to the conclusion of a chain of reasoning ; but I am not yet a believer. The last act of reason has brought me to the brink of the first act of faith. They are generically distinct and separable. The acts of reason are intellectual, and jealous of the interference of the will. The act of faith is an imperative act of the will, founded on and justified by the process and conviction of the intellect. Hitherto I have been a critic : henceforward, if I will, I become a disciple.

It may here be objected that no man can so far suspend the inclination of the will when the question is, has God indeed spoken to man or no ? is the revealed law of purity, generosity, perfection, divine, or only the poetry of imagination ? Can a man be indifferent between two such sides of the problem ? Will he not desire the higher and better side to be true ? and if he desire, will he not incline to the side that he desires to find true ? Can a moral being be absolutely indifferent between two such issues ? and can two such issues be equally attractive to a moral agent ? Can it be indifferent and all the same to us whether God has made Himself and His will known to us or not ? Is there no attraction in light, no repulsion in darkness ? Does not the intrinsic and eternal distinction of good and evil make itself felt in spite of the will ? Are we not responsible to "receive the truth in the love of it ?" Nevertheless, evidence has its own

limits and quantities, and cannot be made more or less by any act of the will. And yet, what is good or bad, high or mean, lovely or hateful, ennobling or degrading, must attract or repel men as they are better or worse in their moral sense; for an equilibrium between good and evil, to God or to man, is impossible.

The last act of my reason, then, is distinct from my first act of faith precisely in this: so long as I was uncertain I suspended the inclination of my will, as an act of fidelity to conscience and of loyalty to truth; but the process once complete, and the conviction once attained, my will imperatively constrains me to believe, and I become a disciple of a Divine revelation.

My friend next tells me that there are Christian Scriptures, and I go through precisely the same process of critical examination and final conviction, the last act of reasoning preceding, as before, the first act of faith.

He then tells me that there is a Church claiming to be divinely founded, divinely guarded, and divinely guided in its custody of Christianity and of the Christian Scriptures.

Once more I have the same twofold process of reasoning and of believing to go through.

There is, however, this difference in the subject-matter: Christianity is an order of supernatural truth appealing intellectually to my reason; the Christian Scriptures are voiceless, and need a witness. They cannot prove their own mission, much less their own authenticity or inspiration. But the Church is visible to the eye, audible to the ear, self-manifesting and self-asserting: I cannot escape from it. If I go to the east, it is there; if I go to the west, it is there also. If I stay at home, it is before me, seated on the hill; if I turn away from it, I am surrounded by its light. It pursues me and calls to me. I cannot deny its existence; I cannot be indifferent to it; I must either listen to it or wilfully stop my ears; I must heed it or defy it, love it or hate it. But my first attitude towards it is to try it with forensic strictness, neither pronouncing it to be Christ nor Antichrist till I have tested its origin, claim, and character. Let us take down the case in shorthand.

1. It says that it interpenetrates all the nations of the civilized world. In some it holds the whole nation in its unity, in others it holds fewer; but in all it is present, visible, audible,

naturalized, and known as the one Catholic Church, a name that none can appropriate. Though often claimed and controversially assumed, none can retain it ; it falls off. The world knows only one Catholic Church, and always restores the name to the right owner.

2. It is not a national body, but extra-national, accused of its foreign relations and foreign dependence. It is international, and independent in a supernational unity.

3. In faith, divine worship, sacred ceremonial, discipline, government, from the highest to the lowest, it is the same in every place.

4. It speaks all languages in the civilized world.

5. It is obedient to one Head, outside of all nations, except one only ; and in that nation, his headship is not national but world-wide.

6. The world-wide sympathy of the Church in all lands with its Head has been manifested in our days, and before our eyes, by a series of public assemblages in Rome, of which nothing like or second to it can be found. In 1854, 350 Bishops of all nations surrounded their Head when he defined the Immaculate Conception. In 1862, 400 Bishops assembled at the canonization of the Martyrs of Japan. In 1867, 500 Bishops came to keep the eighteenth centenary of St. Peter's martyrdom. In 1870, 700 Bishops assembled in the Vatican Council. On the Feast of the Epiphany, 1870, the Bishops of thirty nations during two whole hours made profession of faith in their own languages, kneeling before their head. Add to this, that in 1869, in the sacerdotal jubilee of Pius IX., Rome was filled for months by pilgrims from all lands in Europe and beyond the sea, from the Old World and from the New, bearing all manner of gifts and oblations to the Head of the Universal Church. To this, again, must be added the world-wide outcry and protest of all the Catholic unity against the seizure and sacrilege of September, 1870, when Rome was taken by the Italian Revolution.

7. All this came to pass not only by reason of the great love of the Catholic world for Pius IX., but because they revered him as the successor of St. Peter and the Vicar of Jesus Christ. For that undying reason the same events have been reproduced in the time of Leo XIII. In the early months of this year Rome was once more filled with pilgrims of all nations, coming in thousands as

representatives of millions in all nations, to celebrate the sacerdotal jubilee of the Sovereign Pontiff. The courts of the Vatican could not find room for the multitude of gifts and offerings of every kind which were sent from all quarters of the world.

8. These things are here said, not because of any other importance, but because they set forth in the most visible and self-evident way the living unity and the luminous universality of the One Catholic and Roman Church.

9. What has thus far been said is before our eyes at this hour. It is no appeal to history, but to a visible and palpable fact. Men may explain it as they will; deny it, they cannot. They see the Head of the Church year by year speaking to the nations of the world; treating with Empires, Republics and Governments. There is no other man on earth that can so bear himself. Neither from Canterbury nor from Constantinople can such a voice go forth to which rulers and people listen.

This is the century of revolutions. Rome has in our time been besieged three times; three Popes have been driven out of it, two have been shut up in the Vatican. The city is now full of the Revolution. The whole Church has been tormented by Falck laws, Mancini laws, and Crispi laws. An unbeliever in Germany said some years ago, "The net is now drawn so tight about the Church, that if it escapes this time I will believe in it." Whether he believes, or is even alive now to believe, I cannot say.

Nothing thus far has been said as proof. The visible, palpable facts, which are at this moment before the eyes of all men, speak for themselves. There is one, and only one, world-wide unity of which these things can be said. It is a fact and a phenomenon for which an intelligible account must be rendered. If it be only a human system built up by the intellect, will and energy of men, let the adversaries prove it. The burden is upon them; and they will have more to do as we go on.

Thus far we have rested upon the evidence of sense and fact. We must now go on to history and reason.

Every religion and every religious body known to history has varied from itself and broken up. Brahminism has given birth to Buddhism; Mahometanism is parted into the Arabian and European Khalifates; the Greek schism into the Russian, Constantinopolitan, and Bulgarian autocephalous fragment; Protestantism into its multitudinous diversities. All have departed

from their original type, and all are continually developing new and irreconcilable, intellectual and ritualistic, diversities and repulsions. How is it that, with all diversities of language, civilization, race, interest, and conditions, social and political, including persecution and warfare, the Catholic nations are at this day, even when in warfare, in unchanged unity of faith, communion, worship and spiritual sympathy with each other and with their Head ? This needs a rational explanation.

It may be said in answer, endless divisions have come out of the Church, from Arius to Photius, and from Photius to Luther. Yes, but they all came out. There is the difference. They did not remain in the Church, corrupting the faith. They came out, and ceased to belong to the Catholic unity, as a branch broken from a tree ceases to belong to the tree. But the identity of the tree remains the same. A branch is not a tree, nor a tree a branch. A tree may lose branches, but it rests upon its root, and renews its loss. Not so the religions, so to call them, that have broken away from unity. Not one has retained its members or its doctrines. Once separated from the sustaining unity of the Church, all separations lose their spiritual cohesion, and then their intellectual identity. *Ramus præcisus arescit.*

For the present it is enough to say that no human legislation, authority or constraint can ever create internal unity of intellect and will ; and that the diversities and contradictions generated by all human systems prove the absence of Divine authority. Variations or contradictions are proof of the absence of a Divine mission to mankind. All natural causes run to disintegration. Therefore, they can render no account of the world-wide unity of the One Universal Church.

Such, then, are the facts before our eyes at this day. We will seek out the origin of the body or system called the Catholic Church, and pass at once to its outset eighteen hundred years ago.

I affirm, then, three things : (1) First, that no adequate account can be given of this undeniable fact from natural causes ; (2) that the history of the Catholic Church demands causes above nature ; and (3) that it has always claimed for itself a Divine origin and Divine authority.

I. And, first, before we examine what it was and what it has done, we will recall to mind what was the world in the midst of which it arose.

The most comprehensive and complete description of the old world, before Christianity came in upon it, is given in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Mankind had once the knowledge of God : that knowledge was obscured by the passions of sense ; in the darkness of the human intellect, with the light of nature still before them, the nations worshiped the creature—that is, by pantheism, polytheism, idolatry ; and, having lost the knowledge of God and of His perfections, they lost the knowledge of their own nature and of its laws, even of the natural and rational laws, which thenceforward ceased to guide, restrain, or govern them. They became perverted and inverted with every possible abuse, defeating the end and destroying the powers of creation. The lights of nature were put out, and the world rushed headlong into confusions, of which the beasts that perish were innocent. This is analytically the history of all nations but one. A line of light still shone from Adam to Enoch, from Enoch to Abraham, to whom the command was given, “Walk before Me and be perfect.” And it ran on from Abraham to Caiaphas, who crucified the founder of Christianity. Through all anthropomorphism of thought and language this line of light still passed inviolate and inviolable. But in the world, on either side of that radiant stream, the whole earth was dark. The intellectual and moral state of the Greek world may be measured in its highest excellence in Athens ; and of the Roman world in Rome. The state of Athens—its private, domestic, and public morality—may be seen in Aristophanes.

The state of Rome is visible in Juvenal, and in the fourth book of St. Augustine’s “City of God.” There was only one evil wanting. The world was not Atheist. Its polytheism was the example and the warrant of all forms of moral abominations. *Imitari quod colis* plunged the nations in crime. Their theology was their degradation ; their text-book of an elaborate corruption of intellect and will.

Christianity came in “the fullness of time.” What that fullness may mean, is one of the mysteries of times and seasons which it is not for us to know. But one motive for the long delay of four thousand years is not far to seek. It gave time, full and ample, for the utmost development and consolidation of all the falsehood and evil of which the intellect and will of man are capable. The four great empires were each of them the concen-

tration of a supreme effort of human power. The second inherited from the first, the third from both, the fourth from all three. It was, as it was foretold or described, as a beast, "exceeding terrible; his teeth and claws were of iron; he devoured and broke in pieces; and the rest he stamped upon with his feet."* The empire of man over man was never so widespread, so absolute, so hardened into one organized mass, as in Imperial Rome. The world had never seen a military power so disciplined, irresistible, invincible; a legislation so just, so equitable, so strong in its execution; a government so universal, so local, so minute. It seemed to be imperishable. Rome was called the eternal. The religions of all nations were enshrined in Dea Roma; adopted, practiced openly, and taught. They were all *religiones licitæ*, known to the law; not tolerated only, but recognized. The theologies of Egypt, Greece, and of the Latin world, met in an empyreum, consecrated and guarded by the Imperial law, and administered by the Pontifex Maximus. No fanaticism ever surpassed the religious cruelties of Rome. Add to all this the coluvies of false philosophies of every land, and of every date. They both blinded and hardened the intellect of public opinion and of private men against the invasion of anything except contempt, and hatred of both the philosophy of sophists and of the religion of the people. Add to all this the sensuality of the most refined and of the grossest luxury the world had ever seen, and a moral confusion and corruption which violated every law of nature.

The god of this world had built his city. From foundation to parapet, everything that the skill and power of man could do had been done without stint of means or limit of will. The Divine hand was stayed, or rather, as St. Augustine says, an unsurpassed natural greatness was the reward of certain natural virtues, degraded as they were in unnatural abominations. Rome was the climax of the power of man without God, the apotheosis of the human will, the direct and supreme antagonist of God in His own world. In this the fullness of time was come. Man built all this for himself. Certainly, man could not also build the City of God. They are not the work of one and the same architect, who capriciously chose to build first the city of confusion, suspending for a time his skill and power to build some

*Daniel, vii. 19.

day the City of God. Such a hypothesis is folly. Of two things, one. Disputers must choose one or the other. Both cannot be asserted, and the assertion needs no answer—it refutes itself. So much for the first point.

II. In the reign of Augustus, and in a remote and powerless Oriental race, a Child was born in a stable of a poor Mother. For thirty years He lived a hidden life ; for three years He preached the Kingdom of God, and gave laws hitherto unknown to men. He died in ignominy upon the Cross ; on the third day He rose again ; and after forty days He was seen no more. This unknown Man created the world-wide unity of intellect and will which is visible to the eye, and audible, in all languages, to the ear. It is in harmony with the reason and moral nature of all nations, in all ages, to this day. What proportion is there between the cause and the effect ? What power was there in this isolated Man ? What unseen virtues went out of Him to change the world ? For change the world He did ; and that not in the line or on the level of nature as men had corrupted it, but in direct contradiction to all that was then supreme in the world. He taught the dependence of the intellect against its self-trust, the submission of the will against its license, the subjugation of the passions by temperate control or by absolute subjection against their willful indulgence. This was to reverse what men believed to be the laws of nature : to make water climb upward and fire to point downward. He taught mortification of the lusts of the flesh, contempt of the lusts of the eyes, and hatred of the pride of life. What hope was there that such a teacher should convert imperial Rome ? that such a doctrine should exorcise the fullness of human pride and lust ? Yet so it has come to pass ; and how ? Twelve men more obscure than Himself, absolutely without authority or influence of this world, preached throughout the empire and beyond it. They asserted two facts : the one, that God had been made man ; the other, that He died and rose again. What could be more incredible ? To the Jews the unity and spirituality of God were axioms of reason and faith ; to the Gentiles, however cultured, the resurrection of the flesh was impossible. The Divine Person Who had died and risen could not be called in evidence as the chief witness. He could not be produced in court. Could anything be more suspicious if credible, or less credible even if He were there to say so ? All that they could do was to say, “ We knew

Him for three years, both before His death and after He rose from the dead. If you will believe us, you will believe what we say. If you will not believe us, we can say no more. He is not here, but in heaven. We cannot call Him down." It is true, as we read, that Peter cured a lame man at the gate of the Temple. The Pharisees could not deny it, but they would not believe what Peter said ; they only told him to hold his tongue. And yet thousands in one day in Jerusalem believed in the Incarnation and the Resurrection; and when the Apostles were scattered by persecution, wherever they went men believed their word. The most intense persecution was from the Jews, the people of faith and of Divine traditions. In the name of God and of religion they stoned Stephen, and sent Saul to persecute at Damascus. More than this, they stirred up the Romans in every place. As they had forced Pilate to crucify Jesus of Nazareth, so they swore to slay Paul. And yet, in spite of all, the faith spread.

It is true, indeed, that the Empire of Alexander, the spread of the Hellenistic Greek, the prevalence of Greek in Rome itself, the Roman roads which made the Empire traversable, the Roman peace which sheltered the preachers of the faith in the outset of their work, gave them facilities to travel and to be understood. But these were only external facilities, which in no way rendered more credible or more acceptable the voice of penance and mortification, or the mysteries of the faith, which was immutably "to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness." It was in changeless opposition to nature as man had marred it ; but it was in absolute harmony with nature as God had made it to His own likeness. Its power was its persuasiveness ; and its persuasiveness was in its conformity to the highest and noblest aspirations and aims of the soul in man. The master-key so long lost was found at last ; and its conformity to the wards of the lock was its irrefragable witness to its own mission and message.

But if it is beyond belief that Christianity in its outset made good its foothold by merely human causes and powers, how much more does this become incredible in every age as we come down from the first century to the nineteenth, and from the Apostolic mission to the world-wide Church, Catholic and Roman, at this day.

Not only did the world in the fullness of its power give to the Christian faith no help to root or to spread itself, but it wreaked

all the fullness of its power upon it to uproot and to destroy it. Of the first thirty Pontiffs in Rome, twenty-nine were martyred. Ten successive persecutions, or rather one universal and continuous persecution of two hundred years, with ten more bitter excesses of enmity in every province of the Empire, did all that man can do to extinguish the Christian name. The Christian name may be blotted out here and there in blood, but the Christian faith can nowhere be slain. It is inscrutable, and beyond the reach of man. In nothing is the blood of the martyrs more surely the seed of the faith. Every martyrdom was a witness to the faith, and the ten persecutions were the sealing of the work of the twelve Apostles. The destroyer defeated himself. Christ crucified was visibly set forth before all the nations, the world was a Calvary, and the blood of the martyrs preached in every tongue the Passion of Jesus Christ. The world did its worst, and ceased only for weariness and conscious defeat.

Then came the peace, and with peace the peril of the Church. The world outside had failed; the world inside began to work. It no longer destroyed life; it perverted the intellect, and, through intellectual perversion, assailed the faith at its centre. The Angel of light preached heresy. The Baptismal Creed was assailed all along the line; Gnosticism assailed the Father and Creator of all things; Arianism, the God-head of the Son; Nestorianism, the unity of His person; Monophysites, the two natures; Monothelites, the divine and human wills; Macedonians, the person of the Holy Ghost. So throughout the centuries, from Nicæa to the Vatican, every article has been in succession perverted by heresy and defined by the Church. But of this we shall speak hereafter. If the human intellect could fasten its perversions on the Christian faith, it would have done so long ago; and if the Christian faith had been guarded by no more than human intellect, it would long ago have been disintegrated, as we see in every religion outside the unity of the one Catholic Church. There is no example in which fragmentary Christianities have not departed from their original type. No human system is immutable; no thing human is changeless. The human intellect, therefore, can give no sufficient account of the identity of the Catholic faith in all places and in all ages by any of its own natural processes or powers. The force of this argument is immensely increased when we trace the tradition of the faith through the nineteen Œcumenical Councils

which, with one continuous intelligence, have guarded and unfolded the deposit of faith, defining every truth as it has been successively assailed, in absolute harmony and unity of progression.

What the Senate is to your great Republic, or the Parliament to our English monarchy, such are the nineteen Councils of the Church, with this only difference: the secular Legislatures must meet year by year with short recesses; Councils have met on the average once in a century. The reason of this is that the mutabilities of national life, which are as the water-floods, need constant remedies; the stability of the Church seldom needs new legislation. The faith needs no definition except in rare intervals of periodical intellectual disorder. The discipline of the Church reigns by an universal common law which seldom needs a change, and by local laws which are provided on the spot. Nevertheless, the legislation of the Church, the *Corpus Juris*, or *Canon Law*, is a creation of wisdom and justice, to which no Statutes at large or Imperial pandects can bear comparison. Human intellect has reached its climax in jurisprudence, but the world-wide and secular legislation of the Church has a higher character. How the Christian law corrected, elevated, and completed the Imperial law, may be seen in a learned and able work by an American author, far from the Catholic faith, but in the main just and accurate in his facts and arguments—the *Gesta Christi* of Charles Loring Brace. Water cannot rise above its source, and if the Church by mere human wisdom corrected and perfected the Imperial law, its source must be higher than the sources of the world. This makes a heavy demand on our credulity.

Starting from St. Peter to Leo XIII., there have been some 258 Pontiffs claiming to be, and recognized by the whole Catholic unity as, successors of St. Peter and Vicars of Jesus Christ. To them has been rendered in every age not only the external obedience of outward submission, but the internal obedience of faith. They have borne the onset of the nations who destroyed Imperial Rome, and the tyranny of heretical Emperors of Byzantium; and, worse than this, the alternate despotism and patronage of Emperors of the West, and the subtraction of obedience in the great Western schisms, when the unity of the Church and the authority of its Head were, as men thought, gone for ever. It was the last assault—the forlorn hope of the gates of hell. Every art of destruction had been tried: martyrdom,

heresy, secularity, schism; at last, two, and three, and four claimants, or, as the world says, rival Popes, were set up, that men might believe that St. Peter had no longer a successor, and our Lord no Vicar, upon earth; for, though all might be illegitimate, only one could be the lawful and true Head of the Church. Was it only by the human power of man that the unity, external and internal, which for fourteen hundred years had been supreme, was once more restored in the Council of Constance, never to be broken again? The succession of the English monarchy has been, indeed, often broken, and always restored, in these thousand years. But here is a monarchy of eighteen hundred years, powerless in worldly force or support, claiming and receiving not only outward allegiance, but inward unity of intellect and will. If any man tell us that these two phenomena are on the same level of merely human causes, it is too severe a tax upon our natural reason to believe it.

But the inadequacy of human causes to account for the universality, unity, and immutability of the Catholic Church, will stand out more visibly if we look at the intellectual and moral revolution which Christianity has wrought in the world and upon mankind.

The first effect of Christianity was to fill the world with the true knowledge of the One True God, and to destroy utterly all idols, not by fire but by light. Before the Light of the world no false god and no polytheism could stand. The unity and spirituality of God swept away all theogonies and theologies of the first four thousand years. The stream of light which descended from the beginning expanded into a radiance, and the radiance into a flood, which illuminated all nations, as it had been foretold, "The earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea;" "And idols shall be utterly destroyed." * In this true knowledge of the Divine Nature was revealed to men their own relation to a Creator as of sons to a father. The Greeks called the chief of the gods *Zeus Pater*, and the Latins *Jupiter*; but neither realized the dependence and love of sonship as revealed by the Founder of Christianity.

The monotheism of the world comes down from a primeval and Divine source. Polytheism is the corruption of men and of nations. Yet in the multiplicity of all polytheisms, one supreme

* *Isaias*, xi. 9-11, 18.

Deity was always recognized. The Divine unity was imperishable. Polytheism is of human imagination : it is of men's manufacture. The deification of nature and passions and heroes had filled the world with an elaborate and tenacious superstition, surrounded by reverence, fear, religion, and awe. Every perversion of what is good in man surrounded it with authority ; everything that is evil in man guarded it with jealous care. Against this world-wide and imperious demonology the science of one God, all holy and supreme, advanced with resistless force. Beelzebub is not divided against himself ; and if polytheism is not Divine, monotheism must be. The overthrow of idolatry and demonology was the mastery of forces that are above nature. This conclusion is enough for our present purpose.

A second visible effect of Christianity of which nature cannot offer any adequate cause is to be found in the domestic life of the Christian world. In some nations the existence of marriage was not so much as recognized. In others, if recognized, it was dishonored by profuse concubinage. Even in Israel, the most advanced nation, the law of divorce was permitted for the hardness of their hearts. Christianity republished the primitive law by which marriage unites only one man and one woman indissolubly in a perpetual contract. It raised their mutual and perpetual contract to a sacrament. This at one blow condemned all other relations between man and woman, all the legal gradations of the Imperial law, and all forms and pleas of divorce. Beyond this the spiritual legislation of the Church framed most elaborate tables of consanguinity and affinity, prohibiting all marriages between persons in certain degrees of kinship or relation. This law has created the purity and peace of domestic life. Neither the Greek nor the Roman world had any true conception of a home. The *Ἑστία* or Vesta was a sacred tradition guarded by vestals like a temple worship. It was not a law and a power in the homes of the people. Christianity, by enlarging the circles of prohibition within which men and women were as brothers and sisters, has created the home with all its purities and safeguards.

Such a law of unity and indissolubility, encompassed by a multitude of prohibitions, no mere human legislation could impose on the passions and will of mankind. And yet the Imperial laws gradually yielded to its resistless pressure, and incorporated it in its world-wide legislation. The passions and practices of

four thousand years were against the change ; yet it was accomplished, and it reigns inviolate to this day, though the relaxations of schism in the East and the laxities of the West have revived the abuse of divorces, and have partially abolished the wise and salutary prohibitions which guard the homes of the faithful. These relaxations prove that all natural forces have been, and are, hostile to the indissoluble law of Christian marriage. Certainly, then, it was not by natural forces that the Sacrament of Matrimony and the legislation springing from it were enacted. If these are restraints of human liberty and license, either they do not spring from nature, or they have had a supernatural cause whereby they exist. It was this that redeemed woman from the traditional degradation in which the world had held her. The condition of women in Athens and in Rome—which may be taken as the highest points of civilization—is too well known to need recital. Women had no rights, no property, no independence. Plato looked upon them as State property ; Aristotle as chattels ; the Greeks wrote of them as *κύνες, γυναῖκες, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα κτήματα*. They were the prey, the sport, the slaves of man. Even in Israel, though they were raised incomparably higher than in the Gentile world, they were far below the dignity and authority of Christian women. Libanius, the friend of Julian, the Apostate, said, “O ye gods of Greece, how great are the women of the Christians !” Whence came the elevation of womanhood ? Not from the ancient civilization, for it degraded them ; not from Israel, for among the Jews the highest state of womanhood was the marriage state. The daughter of Jepthe went into the mountains to mourn not her death but her virginity. The marriage state in the Christian world, though holy and good, is not the highest state. The state of virginity unto death is the highest condition of man and woman. But this is above the law of nature. It belongs to a higher order. And this life of virginity, in repression of natural passion and lawful instinct, is both above and against the tendencies of human nature. It begins in a mortification, and ends in a mastery, over the movements and ordinary laws of human nature. Who will ascribe this to natural causes ? and, if so, why did it not appear in the first four thousand years ? And when has it ever appeared except in a handful of vestal virgins, or in Oriental recluses, with what

reality history shows ? An exception proves a rule. No one will imagine that a life of chastity is impossible to nature ; but the restriction is a repression of nature which individuals may acquire, but the multitude have never attained. A religion which imposes chastity on the unmarried, and upon its priesthood, and upon the multitudes of women in every age who devote themselves to the service of One Whom they have never seen, is a mortification of nature in so high a degree as to stand out as a fact and a phenomenon, of which mere natural causes afford no adequate solution. Its existence, not in a handful out of the millions of the world, but its prevalence and continuity in multitudes scattered throughout the Christian world, proves the presence of a cause higher than the laws of nature. So true is this, that jurists teach that the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience are contrary to "the policy of the law," that is, to the interests of the commonwealth, which desires the multiplication, enrichment, and liberty of its members.

To what has been said may be added the change wrought by Christianity upon the social, political, and international relations of the world. The root of this ethical change, private and public, is the Christian home. The authority of parents, the obedience of children, the love of brotherhood, are the three active powers which have raised the society of man above the level of the old world. Israel was head and shoulders above the world around it ; but Christendom is high above Israel. The New Commandment of brotherly love, and the Sermon on the Mount, have wrought a revolution, both in private and public life. From this come the laws of justice and sympathy which bind together the nations of the Christian world. In the old world, even the most refined races, worshiped by our modern philosophers, held and taught that man could hold property in man. In its chief cities there were more slaves than free men. Who has taught the equality of men before the law, and extinguished the impious thought that man can hold property in man ? It was no philosopher : even Aristotle taught that a slave was *δρῶλον ζῶον*. It was no lawgiver, for all taught the lawfulness of slavery till Christianity denied it. The Christian law has taught that man can lawfully sell his labor, but that he cannot lawfully be sold, or sell himself.

The necessity of being brief, the impossibility of drawing out

the picture of the old world, its profound immoralities, its unimaginable cruelties, compels me to argue with my right hand tied behind me. I can do no more than point again to Mr. Brace's "Gesta Christi," or to Dr. Döllinger's "Gentile and Jew," as witnesses to the facts which I have stated or implied. No one who has not read such books, or mastered their contents by original study, can judge of the force of the assertion that Christianity has reformed the world by direct antagonism to the human will, and by a searching and firm repression of human passion. It has ascended the stream of human license, *contra ictum fluminis*, by a power mightier than nature, and by laws of a higher order than the relaxations of this world.

Before Christianity came on earth, the civilization of man by merely natural force had culminated. It could not rise above its source; all that it could do was done; and the civilization in every race and empire had ended in decline and corruption. The old civilization was not regenerated. It passed away to give place to a new. But the new had a higher source, nobler laws and supernatural powers. The highest excellence of men and of nations is the civilization of Christianity. The human race has ascended into what we call Christendom, that is, into the new creation of charity and justice among men. Christendom was created by the world-wide Church as we see it before our eyes at this day. Philosophers and statesmen believe it to be the work of their own hands: they did not make it; but they have for three hundred years been unmaking it by reformations and revolutions. These are destructive forces. They build up nothing. It has been well said by Donoso Cortez that "the history of civilization is the history of Christianity, the history of Christianity is the history of the Church, the history of the Church is the history of the Pontiffs, the greatest statesmen and rulers that the world has ever seen."

Some years ago, a Professor of great literary reputation in England, who was supposed even then to be, as his subsequent writings have proved, a skeptic or non-Christian, published a well-known and very candid book, under the title of "Ecce Homo." The writer placed himself, as it were, outside of Christianity. He took, not the Church in the world as in this article, but the Christian Scriptures as a historical record, to be judged with forensic severity and absolute impartiality of mind. To the

credit of the author, he fulfilled this pledge; and his conclusion shall here be given. After an examination of the life and character of the Author of Christianity, he proceeded to estimate His teaching and its effects under the following heads.

1. The Christian Legislation.
2. The Christian Republic.
3. Its Universality.
4. The Enthusiasm of Humanity.
5. The Lord's Supper.
6. Positive Morality.
7. Philanthropy.
8. Edification.
9. Mercy.
10. Resentment.
11. Forgiveness.

He then draws his conclusion as follows:

"The achievement of Christ in founding by his single will and power a structure so durable and so universal is like no other achievement which history records. The masterpieces of the men of action are coarse and commonplace in comparison with it, and the masterpieces of speculation flimsy and unsubstantial. When we speak of it the commonplaces of admiration fail us altogether. Shall we speak of the originality of the design, of the skill displayed in the execution? All such terms are inadequate. Originality and contriving skill operate indeed, but, as it were, implicitly. The creative effort which produced that against which it is said the gates of hell shall not prevail cannot be analyzed. No architect's designs were furnished for the New Jerusalem; no committee drew up rules for the universal commonwealth. If in the works of nature we can trace the indications of calculation, of a struggle with difficulties, of precaution, of ingenuity, then in Christ's work it may be that the same indications occur. But these inferior and secondary powers were not consciously exercised; they were implicitly present in the manifold yet single creative act. The inconceivable work was done in calmness; before the eyes of men it was noiselessly accomplished, attracting little attention. Who can describe that which unites men? Who has entered into the formation of speech, which is the symbol of their union? Who can describe exhaustively the origin of civil society? He who can do these things can explain the origin of the Christian Church. For others it must be enough to say, 'The Holy Ghost fell on those that believed.' No man saw the building of the New Jerusalem, the workmen crowded together, the unfinished walls and unpaved streets; no man heard the clink of trowel and pickaxe: 'it descended out of heaven from God.'"^{*}

And yet the writer is, as he was then, still outside of Christianity.

III. We come now to our third point, that Christianity has

* "Ecce Homo," Conclusion, p. 329, Fifth Edition. Macmillan. 1886.

always claimed a Divine origin and a Divine presence as the source of its authority and powers.

To prove this by texts from the New Testament would be to transcribe the volume; and if the evidence of the whole New Testament were put in, not only might some men deny its weight as evidence, but we should place our whole argument upon a false foundation. Christianity was anterior to the New Testament, and is independent of it. The Christian Scriptures presuppose both the faith and the Church as already existing, known, and believed. *Prior liber quam stylus*: as Tertullian argued. The Gospel was preached before it was written. The four books were written to those who already believed, to confirm their faith. They were written at intervals: St. Matthew in Hebrew in the year 39, in Greek in 45. St. Mark in 43, St. Luke in 57, St. John about 90, in different places and for different motives. Four Gospels did not exist for sixty years, or two generations of men. St. Peter and St. Paul knew of only three of our four. In those sixty years the faith had spread from east to west. Saints and Martyrs had gone up to their crown who never saw a sacred book. The Apostolic Epistles prove the antecedent existence of the Churches to which they were addressed. Rome and Corinth, and Galatia and Ephesus, Philippi and Colossæ, were Churches with pastors and people before St. Paul wrote to them. The Church had already attested and executed its Divine legation before the New Testament existed; and when all its books were written they were not as yet collected into a volume. The earliest collection was about the beginning of the second century, and in the custody of the Church in Rome. We must, therefore, seek to know what was and is Christianity before and outside of the written books; and we have the same evidence for the oral tradition of the faith as we have for the New Testament itself. Both alike were in the custody of the Church; both are delivered to us by the same witness and on the same evidence. To reject either, is logically to reject both. Happily men are not saved by logic, but by faith. The millions of men in all ages have believed by inheritance of truth divinely guarded and delivered to them. They have no need of logical analysis. They have believed from their childhood. Neither children nor those who *infantibus æquiparantur* are logicians. It is the penance of the doubter and the unbeliever to regain by toil his lost inheritance.

It is a hard penance, like the suffering of those who eternally debate on "predestination, freewill, fate."

Between the death of St. John and the mature lifetime of St. Irenæus fifty years elapsed. St. Polycarp was disciple of St. John, St. Irenæus was disciple of St. Polycarp. The mind of St. John and the mind of St. Irenæus had only one intermediate intelligence, in contact with each. It would be an affectation of minute criticism to treat the doctrine of St. Irenæus as a departure from the doctrine of St. Polycarp, or the doctrine of St. Polycarp as a departure from the doctrine of St. John. Moreover, St. John ruled the Church at Ephesus, and St. Irenæus was born in Asia minor about the year A. D. 120—that is, twenty years after St. John's death, when the Church in Asia Minor was still full of the light of his teaching and of the accents of his voice. Let us see how St. Irenæus describes the faith and the Church. In his work against Heresies, in Book iii. chap. i., he says: "We have known the way of our salvation by those through whom the Gospel came to us; which, indeed, they then preached, but afterwards, by the will of God, delivered to us in Scriptures, the future foundation and pillar of our faith. It is not lawful to say that they preached before they had perfect knowledge, as some dare to affirm, boasting themselves to be correcters of the Apostles. For after our Lord rose from the dead, and when they had been clothed with the power of the Holy Ghost, Who came upon them from on high, they were filled with all truths, and had knowledge which was perfect." In chapter ii. he adds that, "When they are refuted out of Scripture, they turn and accuse the Scriptures as erroneous, unauthoritative, and of various readings, so that the truth cannot be found by those who do not know tradition"—that is, their own. "But when we challenge them to come to the tradition of the Apostles, which is in custody of the succession of Presbyters in the Church, they turn against tradition, saying that they are not only wiser than the Presbyters, but even the Apostles, and have found the truth." "It therefore comes to pass that they will not agree either with the Scriptures or with tradition." (Ibid. c. iii.) "Therefore, all who desire to know the truth ought to look to the tradition of the Apostles, which is manifest in all the world and in all the Church. We are able to count up the Bishops who were instituted in the Church by the Apostles, and their successors to our day. They never taught nor knew such

things as these men madly assert." "But as it would be too long in such a book as this to enumerate the successions of all the Churches, we point to the tradition of the greatest, most ancient Church, known to all, founded and constituted in Rome by the two glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, and to the faith announced to all men, coming down to us by the succession of Bishops, thereby confounding all those who, in any way, by self-pleasing, or vainglory, or blindness, or an evil mind, teach as they ought not. For with this Church, by reason of its greater principality, it is necessary that all churches should agree; that is, the faithful, wheresoever they be, for in that Church the tradition of the Apostles has been preserved." No comment need be made on the words the "greater principality," which have been perverted by every anti-Catholic writer from the time they were written to this day. But if any one will compare them with the words of St. Paul to the Colossians (chap. i. 18), describing the primacy of the Head of the Church in heaven, it will appear almost certain that the original Greek of S. Irenæus, which is unfortunately lost, contained either *τὰ πρωτεία*, or some inflection of *πρωτεύω* which signifies primacy. However this may be, St. Irenæus goes on: "The blessed Apostles, having founded and instructed the Church, gave in charge the Episcopate, for the administration of the same, to Linus. Of this Linus, Paul, in his Epistle to Timothy, makes mention. To him succeeded Anacletus, and after him, in the third place from the Apostles, Clement received the Episcopate, he who saw the Apostles themselves and conferred with them, while as yet he had the preaching of the Apostles in his ears and the tradition before his eyes; and not he only, but many who had been taught by the Apostles still survived. In the time of this Clement, when no little dissension had arisen among the brethren in Corinth, the Church in Rome wrote very powerful letters *potentissimas litteras* to the Corinthians, recalling them to peace, restoring their faith, and declaring the tradition which it had so short a time ago received from the Apostles." These letters of St. Clement are well known, but have lately become more valuable and complete by the discovery of fragments published in a new edition by Lightfoot. In these fragments there is a tone of authority fully explaining the words of St. Irenæus. He then traces the succession of the Bishops of Rome to his own day, and adds: "This demonstration is com-

plete to show that it is one and the same life-giving faith which has been preserved in the Church from the Apostles until now, and is handed on in truth." "Polycarp was not only taught by the Apostles, and conversed with many of those who had seen our Lord, but he also was constituted by the Apostles in Asia to be Bishop in the Church of Smyrna. We also saw him in our early youth, for he lived long, and when very old departed from this life most gloriously and nobly by martyrdom. He ever taught that what he had learned from the Apostles, and what the Church had delivered, those things only are true." In the fourth chapter, St. Irenæus goes on to say: "Since, then, there are such proofs (of the faith), the truth is no longer to be sought for among others, which it is easy to receive from the Church, forasmuch as the Apostles laid up all truth in fullness in a rich depository, that all who will may receive from it the water of life." "But what if the Apostles had not left us the Scriptures: ought we not to follow the order of tradition, which they gave in charge to them to whom they intrusted the Churches? To which order (of tradition) many barbarous nations yield assent, who believe in Christ without paper and ink, having salvation written by the Spirit in their hearts, and diligently holding the ancient tradition." In the twenty-sixth chapter of the same book he says: "Therefore, it is our duty to obey the Presbyters who are in the Church, who have succession from the Apostles, as we have already shown; who also with the succession of the Episcopate have the *charisma veritatis certum*," the spiritual and certain gift of truth.

I have quoted these passages at length, not so much as proofs of the Catholic Faith as to show the identity of the Church at its outset with the Church before our eyes at this hour, proving that the acorn has grown up into its oak, or, if you will, the identity of the Church at this hour with the Church of the Apostolic mission. These passages show the Episcopate, its central principality, its succession, its custody of the faith, its subsequent reception and guardianship of the Scriptures, its Divine tradition, and the *charisma* or Divine assistance by which its perpetuity is secured in the succession of the Apostles. This is almost verbally, after eighteen hundred years, the decree of the Vatican Council: *Veritatis et fidei nunquam deficientis charisma*.*

But St. Irenæus draws out in full the Church of this day. He

* "Const. Dogmatica Prima de Ecclesia Christi," cap. iv.

shows the parallel of the first creation and of the second ; of the first Adam and the Second ; and of the analogy between the Incarnation or natural body, and the Church or mystical body of Christ. He says :

Our faith " we received from the Church, and guard as an excellent gift in a noble vessel, always full of youth, and making youthful the vessel itself in which it is. For this gift of God is intrusted to the Church, as the breath of life (*was imparted*) to the first man, so this end, that all the members partaking of it might be quickened with life. And thus the communication of Christ is imparted ; that is, the Holy Ghost, the earnest of incorruption, the confirmation of the faith, the way of ascent to God. For in the Church (St. Paul says) God placed Apostles, Prophets, Doctors, and all other operations of the Spirit, of which none are partakers who do not come to the Church, thereby depriving themselves of life by a perverse mind and worse deeds. For where the Church is, there is also the Spirit of God ; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and all grace. But the Spirit is truth. Wherefore, they who do not partake of Him (*the Spirit*), and are not nurtured unto life at the breast of the mother (*the Church*), do not receive of that most pure fountain which proceeds from the Body of Christ, but dig out for themselves broken pools from the trenches of the earth, and drink water soiled with mire, because they turn aside from the faith of the Church lest they should be convicted, and reject the Spirit lest they should be taught."*

Again he says :

" The Church, scattered throughout all the world, even unto the ends of the earth, received from the Apostles and their disciples the faith in one God the Father Almighty, that made the heaven and the earth, and the seas, and all things that are in them," &c.†

He then recites the doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His coming again to raise all men, to judge men and angels, and to give sentence of condemnation or of life everlasting. How much soever the language may vary from other forms, such is the substance of the Baptismal Creed. He then adds :

* St. Irenæus, *Cont. Hæret.*, lib. iii. cap. xxiv.

† Lib. i. cap. x.

“The Church having received this preaching and this faith, as we have said before, although it be scattered abroad through the whole world, carefully preserves it, dwelling as in one habitation, and believes alike in these (doctrines) as though she had one soul and the same heart : and in strict accord, as though she had one mouth, proclaims, and teaches, and delivers onward these things. And although there be many diverse languages in the world, yet the power of the tradition is one and the same. And neither do the Churches planted in Germany believe otherwise, or otherwise deliver (the faith), nor those in Iberia, nor among the Celtæ, nor in the East, nor in Egypt, nor in Libya, nor they that are planted in the mainland. But as the sun, which is God’s creature, in all the world is one and the same, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere, and lighteneth all men that are willing to come to the knowledge of the truth. And neither will any ruler of the Church, though he be mighty in the utterance of truth, teach otherwise than thus (for no man is above the master), nor will he that is weak in the same diminish from the tradition ; for the faith being one and the same, he that is able to say most of it hath nothing over, and he that is able to say least hath no lack.”*

To St. Irenæus, then, the Church was “the irrefragable witness of its own legation.” When did it cease so to be ? It would be easy to multiply quotations from Tertullian in A.D. 200, from St. Cyprian A.D. 250, from St. Augustine and St. Optatus in A.D. 350, from St. Leo in A.D. 450, all of which are on the same traditional lines of faith in a divine mission to the world and of a divine assistance in its discharge. But I refrain from doing so because I should have to write not an article but a folio. Any Catholic theology will give the passages which are now before me ; or one such book as the *Loci Theologici* of Melchior Canus will suffice to show the continuity and identity of the tradition of St. Irenæus and the tradition of the Vatican Council, in which the universal church last declared the immutable faith and its own legation to mankind.

The world-wide testimony of the Catholic Church is a sufficient witness to prove the coming of the Incarnate Son to redeem mankind, and to return to His Father ; it is also sufficient to prove the advent of the Holy Ghost to abide with us for ever. The

* St. Irenæus, lib. i. c. x.

work of the Son in this world was accomplished by the Divine acts and facts of His three-and-thirty years of life, death, Resurrection, and Ascension. The office of the Holy Ghost is perpetual, not only as the Illuminator and Sanctifier of all who believe, but also as the Life and Guide of the Church. I may quote now the words of the Founder of the Church : "It is expedient to you that I go : for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you ; but if I go, I will send Him to you."* "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever."† "The Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not nor knoweth Him ; but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you and shall be in you."‡ St. Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians describes the Church as a body of which the Head is in heaven, and the Author of its indefectible life abiding in it as His temple. Therefore the words, "He that heareth you heareth Me." This could not be if the witness of the Apostles had been only human. A Divine guidance was attached to the office they bore. They were, therefore, also judges of right and wrong, and teachers by Divine guidance of the truth. But the presence and guidance of the Spirit of Truth is as full at this day as when St. Irenæus wrote. As the Churches then were witnesses, judges, and teachers, so is the Church at this hour a world-wide witness, an unerring judge and teacher, divinely guided and guarded in the truth. It is therefore not only a human and historical, but a Divine witness. This is the chief Divine truth which the last three hundred years have obscured. Modern Christianity believes in the one advent of the Redeemer, but rejects the full and personal advent of the Holy Ghost. And yet the same evidence proves both. The Christianity of reformers always returns to Judaism, because they reject the full, or do not believe the personal, advent of the Holy Ghost. They deny that there is any infallible teacher among men ; and therefore they return to the types and shadows of the Law before the Incarnation, when the Head was not yet incarnate, and the Body of Christ did not as yet exist.

But perhaps some one will say, "I admit your description of the Church as it is now and as it was in the days of St. Irenæus ;

* St. John, xvi. 7.

† Ibid, xiv. 16.

‡ St. John, xiv. 16, 17

but the eighteen hundred years of which you have said nothing were ages of declension, disorder, superstition, demoralization." I will answer by a question: was not this foretold? Was not the Church to be a field of wheat and tares growing together till the harvest at the end of the world? There were Cathari of old, and Puritans since, impatient at the patience of God in bearing with the perversities and corruptions of the human intellect and will. The Church, like its Head in heaven, is both human and divine. "He was crucified in weakness," but no power of man could wound His divine nature. So with the Church, which is His Body. Its human element may corrupt and die; its divine life, sanctity, authority, and structure cannot die: nor can the errors of human intellect fasten upon its faith, nor the immoralities of the human will fasten upon its sanctity. Its organization of Head and Body is of divine creation, divinely guarded by the Holy Ghost, who quickens it by His indwelling, and guides it by His light. It is in itself incorrupt and incorruptible in the midst of corruption, as the light of heaven falls upon all the decay and corruption in the world, unsullied and unalterably pure. We are never concerned to deny or to cloak the sins of Christians or of Catholics. They may destroy themselves, but they cannot infect the Church from which they fall. The fall of Lucifer left no stain behind him.

When men accuse the Church of corruption, they reveal the fact that to them the Church is a human institution, of voluntary aggregation or of legislative enactment. They reveal the fact that to them the Church is not an object of Divine faith, as the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar. They do not perceive or will not believe that the articles of the Baptismal Creed are objects of faith, divinely revealed or divinely created. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins," are all objects of faith in a Divine order. They are present in human history, but the human element which envelops them has no power to infect or to fasten upon them. Until this is perceived there can be no true or full belief in the advent and office of the Holy Ghost, or in the nature and sacramental action of the Church. It is the visible means and pledge of light and of sanctification to all who do not bar their intellect and their will against its inward and spiritual grace. The Church is not on probation. It is the instrument of probation to

the world. As the light of the world, it is changeless as the firmament. As the source of sanctification, it is inexhaustible as the River of Life. The human and external history of men calling themselves Christian and Catholic has been at times as degrading and abominable as any adversary is pleased to say. But the sanctity of the Church is no more affected by human sins than was Baptism by the hypocrisy of Simon Magus. The Divine foundation, and office, and mission of the Church is a part of Christianity. They who deny it deny an article of faith ; they who believe it imperfectly are the followers of a fragmentary Christianity of modern date. Who can be a disciple of Jesus Christ who does not believe the words ? “On this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ;” “As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you ;” * “I dispose to you, as My Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom ;” † “All power in heaven and earth is given unto Me. Go, therefore, and teach all nations ;” ‡ “He that heareth you heareth Me ;” § “I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world ;” || “When the days of Pentecost were accomplished they were all together in one place : and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming, and there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were, of fire ;” “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost ;” ** “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no other burdens.” †† But who denies that the Apostles claimed a Divine mission ? and who can deny that the Catholic and Roman Church from St. Irenæus to Leo XIII. has ever and openly claimed the same, invoking in all its supreme acts as witness, teacher, and legislator the presence, light, and guidance of the Holy Ghost ? As the preservation of all created things is by the same creative power produced in perpetual and universal action, so the indefectibility of the Church and of the faith is by the perpetuity of the presence and office of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, St. Augustine calls the day of Pentecost, *Natalis Spiritus Sancti*.

* St. John, xx. 21.

† St. Luke, xxii. 29.

‡ St. Matthew, xxviii. 18, 19.

§ St. Luke, x. 10.

|| St. Matthew, xxviii. 20.

** Acts, ii. 1-5.

†† Acts, xv. 28.

It is more than time that I should make an end ; and to do so it will be well to sum up the heads of our argument. The Vatican Council declares that the world-wide Church is the irrefragable witness of its own legation or mission to mankind.

In proof of this I have affirmed :

1. That the imperishable existence of Christianity, and the vast and undeniable revolution that it has wrought in men and in nations, in the moral elevation of manhood and of womanhood, and in the domestic, social and political life of the Christian world, cannot be accounted for by any natural causes, or by any forces that are, as philosophers say, *intra possibilitatem naturæ*, within the limits of what is possible to man.

2. That this world-wide and permanent elevation of the Christian world, in comparison with both the old world and the modern world outside of Christianity, demands a cause higher than the possibility of nature.

3. That the Church has always claimed a Divine origin and a Divine office and authority in virtue of a perpetual Divine assistance. To this even the Christian world, in all its fragments external to the Catholic unity, bears witness. It is turned to our reproach. They rebuke us for holding the teaching of the Church to be infallible. We take the rebuke as a testimony of our changeless faith. It is not enough for men to say that they refuse to believe this account of the visible and palpable fact of the imperishable Christianity of the Catholic and Roman Church. They must find a more reasonable, credible, and adequate account for it. This no man has yet done. The denials are many and the solutions are many ; but they do not agree together. Their multiplicity is proof of their human origin. The claim of the Catholic Church to a Divine authority and to a Divine assistance is one and the same in every age, and is identical in every place. Error is not the principle of unity, nor truth of variations.

The Church has guarded the doctrine of the Apostles, by Divine assistance, with unerring fidelity. The articles of the faith are to-day the same in number as in the beginning. The explicit definition of their implicit meaning has expanded from age to age, as the everchanging denials and perversions of the world have demanded new definitions of the ancient truth. The world is against all dogma, because it is impatient of definiteness and certainty in faith. It loves open questions and the liberty of

error. The Church is dogmatic for fear of error. Every truth defined adds to its treasure. It narrows the field of error and enlarges the inheritance of truth. The world and the Church are ever moving in opposite directions. As the world becomes more vague and uncertain, the Church becomes more definite. It moves against wind and tide, against the stress and storm of the world. There was never a more luminous evidence of this supernatural fact than in the Vatican Council. For eight months all that the world could say and do, like the four winds of heaven, was directed upon it. Governments, statesmen, diplomatists, philosophers, intriguers, mockers, and traitors did their utmost and their worst against it. They were in dread lest the Church should declare that by Divine assistance its Head in faith and morals cannot err; for if this be true, man did not found it, man cannot reform it, man cannot teach it to interpret its history or its acts. It knows its own history, and is the supreme witness of its own legation.

I am well aware that I have been writing truisms, and repeating trite and trivial arguments. They are trite because the feet of the faithful for nearly nineteen hundred years have worn them in their daily life; they are trivial because they point to the one path in which the wayfarer, though a fool, shall not err.

HENRY EDWARD,
Card. Archbishop of Westminster.